

## Transcript

Martha Coakley, with me this evening is our Civil Rights Division Chief Maura Healey, and to her left is Assistant Attorney General Jessica Lindemann who was part of the team who worked on this case.

Today's two landmark decisions are, frankly, a victory for civil rights in Massachusetts and I hope that they show progress towards the understanding of all, that marriage equality is a civil rights issue.

Today's two decisions, one brought by GLAD and two named plaintiffs, another parallel suit with some different issues, certainly around standing, brought by the Commonwealth, were decided by Judge Tauro, and they have decided that the equality for all married couples in Massachusetts should be the law of the land here and that it assures our citizens in Massachusetts that there will not be two standards or two ways in which people will be treated.

Judge Tauro's decision today, decided that it is unconstitutional for the federal government through the Defense of Marriage Act to discriminate, first by DOMA's restricted definition of marriage, and secondly, that it is unconstitutional for DOMA to create or to cause Massachusetts to create a system of first and second class marriages because as Massachusetts has, as you know, through the *Goodridge* decision, sided that under its constitution marriage equality is required here.

We're certainly pleased with Judge Tauro's decision, his analysis and discussion of many of the issues involved in terms of the standing, the spending clause, state sovereignty issues. We certainly congratulate GLAD on their parallel and equally good decision. We believe that both decisions today are a victory for equality. And I would be happy to take questions if anybody has them.